

Services provided by the Government

Suppose you purchased a new **Trek mountain bike** with the money you earned from a part-time job. The **purchase price** was **\$850.00**. The sales clerk told you that it would cost an additional **5% government sales tax (GST - Goods and Services Tax)** plus **8% provincial sales tax (PST)**. Answer the following questions.

Remember to show your work.

/3 marks

Calculate the amount you would pay to the **federal government**.

Answer: _____

Calculate the amount you would pay to the **provincial government**.

Answer: _____

Calculate the **total purchase price** of your new Trek bike.

Answer: _____

The **town of Ste. Anne**, like all municipal governments in Canada, provides a **range of services** for the people in the community. See if you can think of **SIX different services** provided by the municipality to its constituents. /6 marks



Ville de **SAINTE-ANNE**
Town of **STE. ANNE**

Hint: google 'Municipal Services' if you don't know...

| Description of Ste. Anne's Municipal Services | |
|---|--|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |
| 6. | |

D. MAKING LAWS IN CANADA

“There outta be a law.” Heard that before? **The purpose of all three levels of government, municipal, provincial and federal, is to make laws.** How do they do that?

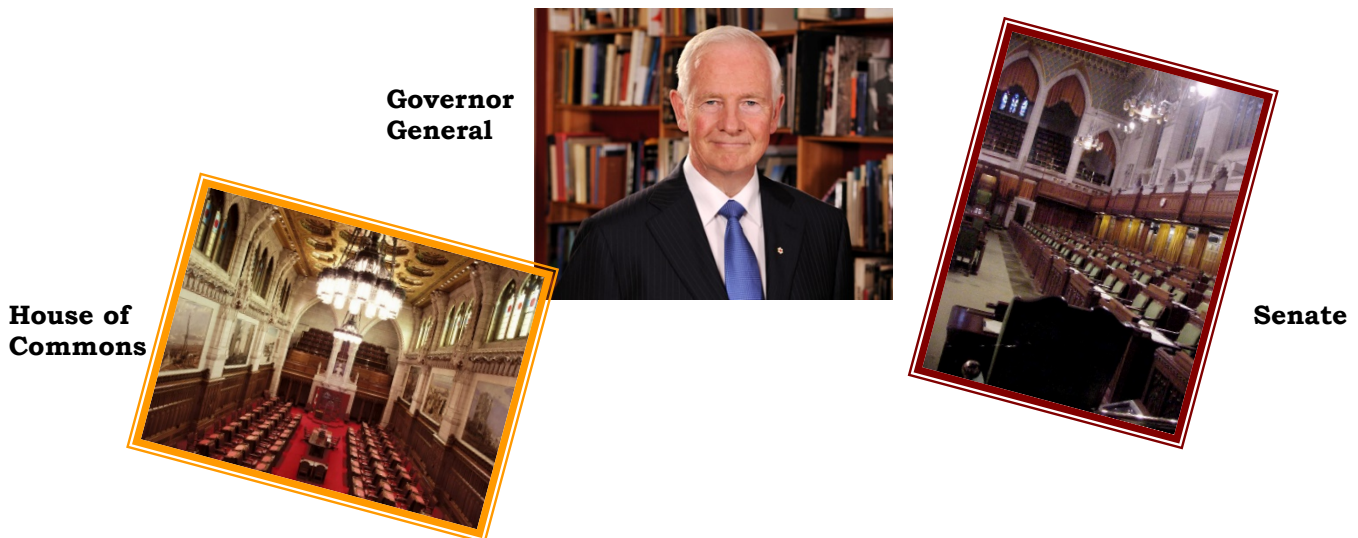
Read the following information on lawmaking and answer the questions that follow:

All laws are an attempt to solve a problem. Property owners worry about youth vandalism at night – health experts worry about drug and alcohol abuse – a minority group claims discrimination – a lobby group wants to stop drunken driving while another wants to limit firearm ownership – city residents complain about speeders – military experts want money to purchase helicopters. When we demand action from any level of government, we are asking for more laws.

Laws! Laws! Laws! – Laws to prevent or stop action. Laws to regulate action – Laws to provide money to do things. The business of all governments is to make laws. The pressure for more laws has many sources – from news media editorials, opinion poll results, election promises, public demonstrations, advice of experts, or lobby groups (groups who are organized to pressure politicians to favor certain causes – equal rights for women, nuclear energy, anti-smoking).

How Does the Law Making Process Work?

A new law must be worked on by all three parts of our parliamentary system of government – House of Commons, Senate and Governor General.



To begin the process, a problem comes to the attention of the Prime Minister and Cabinet – for instance, an increase in child poverty, a request for tax relief for NHL teams, or protection of whales in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Soon, pressure mounts to do something – public protests, media opinion, public opinion polls, letters to the editor or opposition MPs. (Pressure groups will be covered in more detail later).

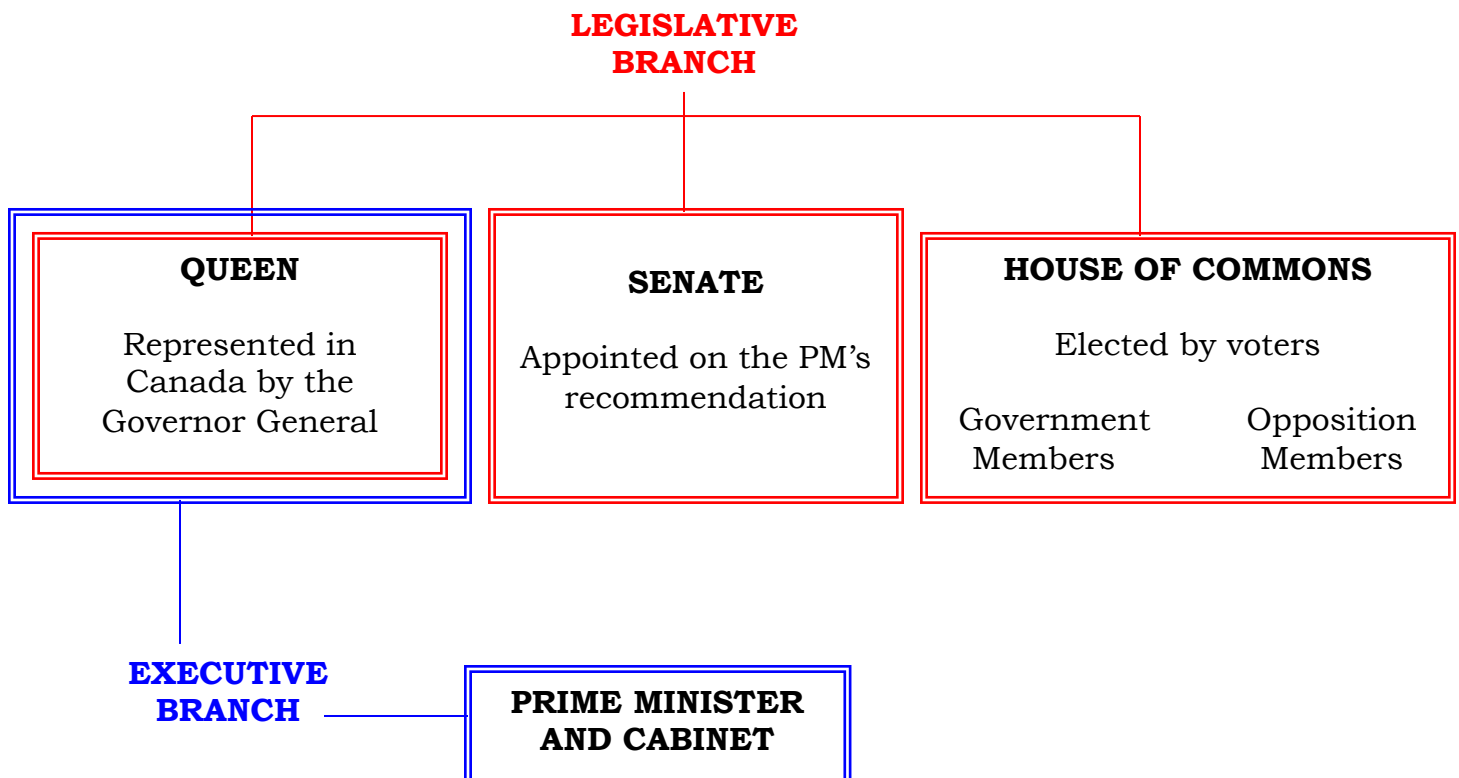
Making a New Law

Now, the Cabinet decides a new law is required. Teams of public servants, lawyers and other experts go to work on the details of a new law. The Cabinet meets and will look over the proposal and consider changes. The Cabinet minister whose department is most concerned will introduce the proposed law to the House of Commons in Canada's Parliament.

The new law, now called a Bill, is introduced to the House of Commons. A Bill is given three readings. At first reading the Bill is simply introduced. After the second reading a House committee will study each part of the Bill in detail and make changes. At third reading, MPs debate the Bill in the House of Commons, where passionate arguments may occur. The role of opposition MPs is to oppose. The role of government MPs is to support the Bill. Debates become lively when tempers rise and MPs make claims and counter claims. When all has been said, the MPs vote on the Bill. If a majority of MPs vote in favor of the Bill, it is passed on to the Senate.

In the Senate, the same is repeated – three readings. If the Senate makes changes to the Bill, the House of Commons must approve the Bill all over again. Usually, the Senate takes a careful look at a Bill and it is passed by a majority of Senators.

Once a majority of MPs and Senators has approved the Bill, it is moved onto the Governor General who signs the Bill. This is known as royal assent. It is now an Act of Parliament and its contents are laws.



The business of government doesn't end with the making of laws. **For a law to go into action, thousands of government employees, called civil servants, are responsible for the day-to-day tasks of making all laws work** – handling forms, collecting taxes, purchasing new equipment, hiring new personnel, informing the public or changing methods of doing business.

In addition, new laws require new law enforcement. **An entire justice system, which includes police, courts and prisons is required to make sure that laws are obeyed.** Citizens pay for the work of government with the taxes they pay. The more action people demand from government, the more taxes have to be paid to support it.

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Just because a government has passed a law doesn't mean it's legal. It may take away or limit the rights and freedoms granted to all Canadians. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms, passed in 1982, guarantees Canadian citizens protection from unjust government laws. The role of the Supreme Court is to rule on laws that persons believe are unjust. Rights and Freedoms in the Charter include:

Fundamental Freedoms: Freedom of religion, thought, belief, opinion, assembly and expression.

Legal Rights: The right to life, liberty and security, the right to be secure from unreasonable search and seizure, the right to be considered innocent until proven guilty, the right to a fair trial.

Equality Under the Law: Every Canadian has an equal right to the protection and services of the police and courts.

Equality Rights: Protection under the law to live and work regardless of race, religion, ethnic origin, color, sex, age, mental or physical ability.



MAKING LAWS

Use information from the reading to respond to the following statements.



1. The three levels of government in Canada.

2. The purpose of all levels of government.

3. What all laws attempt to do.

4. What someone is asking for who wants government action.

5. Three sources of pressure on governments to act.

6. What we call an organized group that pressures politicians to act.

7. Something that must exist before governments will act.

8. The part of the federal government that decides we need a law.

9. What a new law is called until it finally becomes a law.

10. The part of the federal government that first hears a Bill.

11. The title of the person who proposes a Bill to the H of C.

12. The number of times a bill is “read” to the H of C.

13. The number of votes required to pass a Bill.

14. Where a Bill goes after the House of Commons.

15. Name for government employees who put laws into daily use.

16. The branch of government that may rule a new law is unjust.

Use the text boxes below to create a **flow chart that shows the eight steps in the process of making a federal law**. The **first and last boxes** have been done for you. /10 marks

